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homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

Monday, Jan. 31, 1944.

Subject: "SALVAGING WASTE PARTS OF VEGETABLES." Information from home economists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

--ooOoo--

Sharp pointed knives.....sharp eyes.....a good cutting board....a deep soup kettle and other saucepans....bowls of different sizes....and plenty of cold water are about all a really good cook needs to salvage many odds and ends of vegetable materials that are often thrown away. Every portion of food saved and served in some tasty way means that much food you don't have to buy.

For example, serve a salad made of shredded raw vegetables, and use with them outside leaves that would usually be thrown away. You not only avoid buying extra quantities of something else when you concoct a dish "out of nothing." When you use parts of vegetables that are otherwise discarded, it may mean more vitamins and minerals in the family menus. So in these days of thrifty home management it's worth while to check with the home economists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture on the possible ways to use a paring knife rather than a can opener.

Let's run through the various vegetables, beginning with the green leafy ones like cabbage, lettuce, spinach, the tops of beets and turnips. Of course prevention is better than cure, so keep outer leaves from wilting in order to use all you have. However, the home economists suggest, don't throw away a leaf of lettuce or cabbage just because the edges are touched with brown or because there are broken places or wilted spots on the leaves. Wash these outer leaves in cold water. Then trim out the spots.

Shred the rest of the leaves for a mixed salad. If you have spinach on hand, chop some of the broken but still crisp leaves to add dark green color to your salad. Maybe you have some parsley that you could chop and put in your salad. Any time that you have parsley garnish left on a platter, wash it and put it in a tight jar in the

refrigerator so you'll have it to garnish something else, or put it in salad or soup. Parsley is a good source of vitamin A and vitamin C, and if people would eat it instead of considering it a mere trimming, they'd have a few extra vitamin values in the meal.

Of course you can also put any other raw vegetables you like in a salad based on your lettuce-cabbage-spinach and parsley foundation. Or simply serve these four vegetables with a well-seasoned French dressing, with a little trace of garlic or onion in it, or how about some chopped spring onion tops? Chopped celery leaves? and thinly sliced radishes for red color and peppery tang?

When you buy beets, take the tops home and cook them separately from the beet roots. The tops of young spring beets are the nicest, but you can use many of the older beet green leaves, too. If you haven't enough leaves on the bunch of beets that you buy, you could get a small amount of spinach or kale to combine with the beet greens. In just a few weeks now you'll be able to find some wild greens to blend with the beet tops. Turnip tops come in during the spring months, too, though just now turnips are sold "topped." Just a word of warning on one kind of vegetable tops---carrot tops. Rabbits like carrot tops but most human beings don't---so don't waste any time cooking carrot tops.

Instead of salad, maybe you'd rather make a well-seasoned broth from the outer leaves and coarser stems of some of your vegetables. Good materials for this include outside leaves of lettuce and cabbage, leaves and outside stalks of celery, broccoli or cauliflower, stems of green onions, clean peelings from potatoes and carrots, tomato skins, and later on, tough ends of asparagus. Strain these cooked vegetables, and if necessary flavor the stock with one or more bouillon cubes, or meat stock or a few spoonfuls of soy sauce.

Another way to use trimmed outer leaves and chopped parsley is to put them into a vegetable loaf or poultry stuffing, or mix them with butter or margarine for sandwich fillings. Chopped parsley adds a touch to dumplings made for a stew or a chick-

en fricassees.

Many people leave broccoli stalks on their plates because stalks are not tender when the tops are done. To avoid this waste, when you prepare broccoli, cut off the thick stems fairly near the flowerets and trim off the woody ends. Then split the stalks or cut them in slices, and cook them separately from the tops, and a little longer. You can cook the more tender green broccoli leaves with the stalks, too. Either serve the stalks and greens along with the tops or as a separate vegetable at another meal. You might serve the stalks in a white sauce.

Celery is useful to the last clean leaf. Stew the coarser outer stalks for a hot vegetable. Serve with simple seasoning or in a sauce made from the celery water. Or cook equal parts of celery and turnips together, or celery and tomatoes. After making celery tender you can scallop it for a change or mix it with bread crumb stuffing or put it in hash. The tender inside stalks are nicest, of course, for eating raw. Dry any leaves you don't use in soup, and you'll have one more herb seasoning when you need it.

Don't peel squash, and you won't have any peelings to dispose of. Summersquash ---the yellow crook-neck kind---needs only slicing into convenient-sized pieces that will steam or pan quickly. You don't need to discard the seeds of summer squash---they're good food and will cook tender rapidly. Cut Hubbard squash and acorn squash into serving sizepieces and bake them. Trim out the seeds and "rag" of these two squashes and season the cavity.

Cooking white potatoes in their jackets has come to be standard practice for thrifty homemakers. If you scrub new potatoes well you can encourage the family to eat the skins---they'll prove good filler-uppers for active, hungry youngsters.

Cook root vegetables in their skins if they are young---carrots, turnips, beets, parsnips, and salsify or oyster plant. Then you lose but little food value in cooking them.

